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4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE					CONTRACT NUMBER	
Conceptual Problems in Main Group Chemistry					F04611-99-C-0025 5b. GRANT NUMBER	
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				5C.	PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER	
6. AUTHOR(S)		The control of the co		5d.	PROJECT NUMBER	
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K. Christe, et al.				5e. A2		
					WORK UNIT NUMBER	
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7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)					PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT MBER	
ERC, Inc.						
10 E. Saturn Blvd. Edwards AFB, CA 93524					· ·	
Lawards III B, CIT)	3324					
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9. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)				10.	SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)	
Air Force Decearch I	aboratory (AEMC	"				
Air Force Research Laboratory (AFMC) AFRL/PRS					SPONSOR/MONITOR'S	
5 Pollux Drive					NUMBER(S)	
Edwards AFB CA 93524-7048				AF	RL-PR-ED-AB-2003-125	
Approved for public		on unlimited.				
13. SUPPLEMENTARY	NOTES					
14. ABSTRACT						
				200	30616 ()40	
15. SUBJECT TERMS						
				40 10		
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	18. NUMBER OF PAGES	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON Sheila Benner	
a. REPORT	b. ABSTRACT	c. THIS PAGE			19b. TELEPHONE NUMBER (include area code)	
Unclassified	Unclassified	Unclassified	Α Α		(661) 275-5693	
					Standard Form 298 (Rev. 8-98) Prescribed by ANSI Std. 239.18	

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188

MEMORANDUM FOR PRS (In-House Contractor Publication)

FROM: PROI (STINFO)

SUBJECT: Authorization for Release of Technical Information, Control Number: AFRL-PR-ED-AB-2003-125 K. Christe (AFRL/ERC) et al., "Conceptual Problems in Main Group Chemistry" (abstract only)

1. Authorization for Release of Technical Information, Control Number: AFRL-FR-ED-AB-2003-1

K. Christe (AFRL/ERC) et al., "Conceptual Problems in Main Group Chemistry" (abstract only)

226 Nat'l ACS Meeting

(Statemen

(Statement A)

(New York, NY, 7-11 September 2003) (Deadline: None provided)

Conceptual Problems in Main Group Chemistry

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During our past work numerous issues concerning bonding situations in main group compounds were encountered that will be highlighted in this talk. Problems to be addressed include:

- (i) The steric activity of free valence electron pairs.
- (ii) The role of semi-ionic, multi-center bonding in complex fluorides, oxofluorides, and compounds containing sterically active free valence electron pairs.
- (iii) How the replacement of fluorine ligands in pentagonal bipyramidal heptafluorides by either doubly bonded oxygen ligands or free valence electron pairs influences the overall bonding.
- (iv) The difficulty of describing in the N₅⁺ cation the bonding and charge distribution derived from the experimental data, with resonance structures that satisfy the octet rule.